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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Kurds Seek Independence, Imams Status in Iraq - Milliyet
DEHAP to Join Zana's Party - Hurriyet
Greece Mourns Plane Crash Victims - Aksam
PKK Clashes with Syrian Troops in North Syria - Sabah
Sharon: Palestinians in Desperate Condition - Sabah
Gaza War - Milliyet
38-Year of Occupation to End in Gaza - Hurriyet
Early Elections Possible in Israel - Aksam
Erdogan Sends Support Message to Schroeder before German
Elections - Hurriyet
Iranian Students Rally for Nuclear Energy Rights - Milliyet
Aliyev's Wife to Run for Parliament - Milliyet

OPINION MAKERS

Bush Lauds the Iraqis over Constitution - Radikal
Bush Praises the Iraqi Constitutional 'Disagreement' -
Cumhuriyet
Constitutional Deadlock Raises Partition Concerns in Iraq -
Zaman
Signals for a Civil War in Iraq - Yeni Safak
Settlers Resist Israeli Troops, 800 Detained - Radikal
Gaza Evacuation 'War' Begins - Zaman
British Muslims React to New Anti-Terror Package - Zaman
Dervis' First Day at UNDP - Yeni Safak
17 Spanish Troops Killed in Helicopter Crash in Afghanistan
- Radikal
Bloody Revolt in Guatemala: 31 Killed - Yeni Safak
Chile Changes Pinochet-Era Constitution - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

NSC to Discuss 'Kurdish Issue': Turkey's National Security
Council (NSC) is to discuss a report drafted by the Turkish
General Staff (TGS) at its monthly meeting on June 23,
"Hurriyet" reports. The TGS report says that defining the
problems in east and southeast Turkey as the 'Kurdish issue'
might negatively affect the security forces fighting against
terrorists and encourage the supporters of terrorist
organizations. The report advises that different units of
the state apparatus should coordinate their statements,
which should be based on a common plan and strategy.
Economic and social hardships form the main cause of the
problems in the southeast, according to the TGS report,
which calls for an increase in employment opportunities and
efforts for economic revitalization. It also says that
'civilian elements' should play a larger role in tackling
these problems. Iraq, Cyprus and the EU are among other
issues to be raised at the NSC meeting.

Britain Welcomes Arrest of Sakra: Britain welcomed Tuesday
the arrest in Turkey of the suspected Syrian al-Qaida member
Louai Sakra as a 'significant success' in the fight against
terrorism, papers report. 'The arrest underlines the
professionalism and commitment shown by Turkish police and
represents a significant success in the global struggle
against al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations,' the
British embassy in Ankara said in a statement. Sakra has
admitted to plotting attacks against Israeli cruise liners
off Turkey's Mediterranean coast. The British embassy
statement said that Sakra was also accused of involvement in
the November 2003 suicide bombings against British and
Jewish targets in Istanbul and supporting Zarkawi's
activities to destabilize Iraq.

Police Seize USD 7 Million of Uranium in Istanbul: Acting
on a tip off by Turkish intelligence, police arrested two
Turkish 'couriers' trying to sell 173 grams of uranium in
Istanbul, "Sabah" reports. The couriers, who wanted USD 7

million for the uranium, said it was smuggled into Turkey by a Russian Federation national. Officials said that there was no 'uranium market' in Turkey, and that 'serious consequences' would occur if it reached the hands of terrorist organizations, uranium's most likely buyers.

PKK/Kongra Gel Testing Ground to Lay Down Arms: Former DEP lawmaker and the leader of PKK/Kongra Gel, Zubeyir Aydar, told "Milliyet" columnist Derya Sazak in a telephone interview that they were testing the ground for a cease in attacks and preparing to turn a new page of 'inaction.' Sazak comments that Kongra Gel started considering the possibility of laying down arms after Prime Minister Erdogan's democratic messages in Diyarbakir last Friday. Aydar asked Sazak whether the Turkish government was determined to seek a democratic solution to the Kurdish problem. Aydar is concerned that despite Erdogan's pledges that security problems will not prompt restriction of freedoms, Turkey's National Security Council (NSC) may not resist demands coming from the military for broader authority. Sazak expects the PKK/Kongra Gel to announce a decision soon.

DEHAP to be Dissolved: The pro-Kurdish DEHAP chairman Tuncer Bakirhan said Tuesday that his party completed its mission, adding that it will be dissolved and that party members will join the 'Democratic Society Movement' (DTH) formed under the leadership of former Kurdish lawmakers Leyla Zana and Orhan Dogan. DEHAP members will be transferred to the Zana and friends' grouping once the DTH completes transformation into a political party. DEHAP will not be able to merge with the DTH due to a lawsuit to close the party that was brought to the Constitutional Court, papers report.

RTUK to Allow Broadcasts in Kurdish: After receiving orders from Prime Minister Erdogan to approve applications for broadcasts in languages other than Turkish, Turkey's radio and television watchdog RTUK called on nine broadcasters who had applied to broadcast in Kurdish to provide missing documents in order to be given a license, dailies report. RTUK will ask the channels for pledges that they will not teach Kurdish, will not air programs threatening the national unity, and that they will subtitle all TV programs in Turkish. The Turkish General Staff, Turkish Intelligence Organization MIT, and the interior ministry officials have warned in meetings with RTUK members against the perils of broadcasts in languages other than Turkish, papers comment. "Sabah" regards the efforts in support of Kurdish broadcasting as the first concrete step forward for democratization in southeast Turkey.

EU Calls for 'Deeds' in Southeast Turkey: European Union (EU) diplomats welcomed the statements by Prime Minister Erdogan acknowledging the Kurdish problem in Turkey, but called on the PM to outline proposals to solve the problem, "Cumhuriyet" reports. The diplomats said that taking concrete steps to boost economic and social development in the southeast was essential for Turkey's EU membership.

Iraqi Women's Sharia Worry: "Cumhuriyet" quotes Huzen Mahmud from the 'Iraq Women Freedom Organization' as telling the BBC radio that the new constitution will not change the 'dark realities' in Iraq, adding that adopting sharia law will bring catastrophic consequences for the Iraqi nation, particularly women in the war-ravaged country. Women are subjected to violence in Iraq, Mahmud said, and claimed that the insurgents used the occupation as a pretext to behead, kill and rape women. She also claimed that the Iraqi nation went backwards, and that 'honor killings' were on the rise since the beginning of the occupation of Iraq. 'Iraq's occupation has been solely responsible for the ambiguity and instability in Iraq and around the world,' she said. Mahmud blamed the coalition forces in Iraq for doing nothing in the face of women's problems.

Turkish Diplomats in Europe on the Eve of October 3: Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) U/S Ali Tuygan and Deputy undersecretaries Ertugrul Apakan, Nabi Sensoy and Volkan Bozkir are in European capitals to give the message that Turkey will not recognize Nicosia, but will continue efforts for a settlement on the divided island. Diplomats are working to eliminate the possibility that the Cyprus issue may hamper Turkey's membership negotiations with the European bloc. Ankara will continue the campaign until October 3, the date for starting EU accession talks with Turkey, says the report.

Turkish Cypriots Share Greeks' Grief over Plane Crash Victims: "Nicosia Cyprus Mail," an independent daily published in south Cyprus, reported Wednesday that Turkish Cypriot 'prime minister' Ferdi Sabit Soyer ordered that flags in the north be lowered in memory of the victims of a Greek Cypriot jetliner that crashed near Athens last weekend, killing all 121 passengers on board. Soyer sent messages of condolence to all Greek Cypriot political

parties, stressing that the Turkish Cypriot community shared the grief of their compatriots in the south. Soyer was not alone in expressing sympathy for the families and friends of those who died. Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat on Sunday called President Tassos Papadopoulos to offer condolences, eliciting thanks from Papadopoulos for his close interest. Peace and Democracy Movement (BDH) leader Mustafa Akinci also offered his condolences, calling on the Turkish Cypriot authorities to cancel celebrations planned in the north to mark the second phase of the Turkish military operations in 1974. 'When your neighbor is in grief it is not right to hold celebrations. We have to show that we share the sorrow of our neighbors, and canceling the celebrations would send a meaningful message to that effect,' Akinci said. He added that he hoped the shared grief might improve relations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. The Turkish Cypriot press also expressed its sympathies for those who had lost loved ones with top-selling daily "Kibris" declaring on its front page yesterday, 'We are in mourning. From our hearts, we share the pain of our neighbors.' Outspoken daily "Afrika," a strong critic of the Talat administration, berated them for not heeding Akinci's call for invasion celebrations to be cancelled. 'The Greek Cypriot side has announced three days of mourning. In the north, flags will only be lowered during office hours and victory celebrations will take place. This way the Greek Cypriots will mourn twice,' the paper said.

20,000 Children Live on Streets in Diyarbakir: Turkey's Family Research Institution warned in a report that 20,000 children living on the streets in Diyarbakir faced serious education and health risks, "Yeni Safak" reports. Most of the children are mentally and socially retarded, said the report, adding that they have been deprived of nutrition, clothing and education. It also said that Diyarbakir has lost its 'identity and integrity' after scores of displaced families from rural areas in southeast Turkey settled in the city in shantytowns. The report noted that the situation threatened not only Diyarbakir but Turkey as well, and warned that it will be impossible to solve the children's problems in the near future if action is not taken now. Turkish Academic Freed in Armenia: A Yerevan court on Tuesday suspended a two-year sentence of Yektan Turkyilmaz, a Turkish researcher, for trying to smuggle ancient books out of Armenia. Yektan Turkyilmaz, a doctoral student at the Duke University in the US, was arrested in mid-June at the Yerevan airport when several 17th-century books were discovered in his luggage. 'I am still a friend of Armenia,' Turkyilmaz said after a two-month detention, adding that he would return to the US to continue studies in anthropology.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq; Israel/Gaza Withdrawal

"The Iraq Scenarios"

Cengiz Candar observed in the conservative-sensational "Dunden Bugune Tercuman" (8/16): "The Iraqi parliament approved the one-week delay for the finalization of the constitution. However, recent news from Baghdad clearly indicates that the differences between Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis cannot be eliminated within this time frame. Even if the concerned sides reach an agreement and pass the constitution, the structure of Iraq will still require further work. In fact, if the constitution is approved, it will serve as a transitional document for the next stage. Iraq's future will not be shaped in the paperwork but in the field. . The southern oil-rich area in Iraq is under Shiite control and makes up both 60 percent of oil production and 60 percent of the total population. Moreover this area is under the full influence of religious parties and is exposed to Iranian influence as well. There are even efforts in this area to form an Iraq-Iran alliance. . Shiites want a federal Iraq with autonomy from the central Baghdad administration. Sunnis are against the federal structure because it would give extra power to the Shiites. . As for the Kurds, they have been ruling themselves since 1991 and they want an official recognition of the de facto situation. The only additional issue is about Kirkuk, which Kurds want to include in their area. . If the Iraqi sides do not agree on federalism, Kurds are likely to start immediately working for an independent structure. In fact, some argue that even if federalism is the formula agreed on, it will not last long. It will only be the initial stage for the eventual division of Iraq. Given the current picture, will Turkey benefit more from an independent Kurdish state? This is a question worth thinking about."

"Israel's New Equation"

Mete Cubukcu wrote in the leftist "Birgun" (8/17): "Everyone tries to claim credit for Israel's withdrawal process. El-Fetih, Hamas and Islamic Jihad are celebrating the withdrawal separately. Mahmud Abbas claims that the Palestine Administration forced Israel to withdraw, while Hamas and Islamic Jihad believe that the insurgency is the

main reason for the withdrawal. In short, everyone announced their own victory. Hamas, which is getting stronger in the region, claims rights in certain areas where Israel withdrew and also wants to be a partner in the Gaza Administration. However, Hamas also rejects the surrender of weapons. The Palestine Administration has to convince the armed groups on that point. The fanatic right wing groups in Israel are very disturbed by the armed Hamas presence and claim that withdrawal encouraged the terrorist groups to act in the region. It is a well-known fact that during this process, any attack launched by either side could damage this sensitive process. In sum, it seems that the plans in the Middle East, as before, will proceed on a fragile equation."

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